



CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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## **COSSA Statement in Support of the National Science Foundation for the Future Act (H.R. 2225)**

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is pleased to endorse the bipartisan *National Science Foundation for the Future Act* (H.R. 2225), introduced by leaders of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee, Representatives Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), Frank Lucas (R-OK), Haley Stevens (D-MI), and Michael Waltz (R-FL). We are especially appreciative of the open and consultative process used to develop this important legislation and attention paid to the utility of the social and behavioral sciences in bringing scientific findings to bear on solving critical societal challenges. Further, the *NSF for the Future Act* takes a holistic approach to NSF reauthorization, recognizing that U.S. scientific leadership and competitiveness hinge not only on technological advancement, but on support for research starting at the most fundamental level and across all domains of science.

The U.S. scientific enterprise requires stability, predictability, and sustainable funding growth to thrive. Just as importantly, it requires an environment that allows it to invest in the best ideas and take risks to achieve transformative scientific advancements. The *NSF for the Future Act* authorizes five years of sustained funding growth to address years of stagnant budgets, invests in strengthening the STEM pipeline—most notably, by broadening access to research opportunities to those historically underrepresented—and proposes the establishment of a new Directorate for Science and Engineering Solutions aimed at supporting “use-inspired” research to address “areas of societal and national importance.” Further, it reaffirms peer review as the process by which the scientific merit of individual proposals is assessed, advancing the rigor, impact, and innovation that are hallmarks of world class basic research.

The legislation thoughtfully balances the critical need to preserve NSF’s defining role—to be an incubator for basic scientific discovery across all areas of science—while moving the agency in new and exciting directions. COSSA appreciates the thoughtful manner in which the legislation has proposed establishing a new directorate focused on use-inspired research to address some of the most complex societal challenges, including giving NSF leadership the responsibility to identify focus areas for the directorate. We look forward to continued engagement with the bill’s sponsors to define a role for the new directorate that complements existing NSF research activities, increases opportunities for all STEM fields—including the social and behavioral sciences—and advances the agency’s mission while adhering to its core principles of fundamental research.

Finally, COSSA applauds the attention paid to improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM and ensuring safe and inclusive research experiences free from harassment and discrimination. The legislation recognizes that broadening participation in STEM requires the dismantling of structural barriers at the institutional level—an insight research from the social and behavioral sciences has helped to illuminate. The *NSF for the Future Act* includes proposals to enhance NSF’s efforts in this regard and expand access

to research opportunities by codifying the INCLUDES initiative, increasing resources for graduate training and mentorship, enhancing the Graduate Research Fellowship Program, and creating a pilot program to encourage partnerships with “emerging research institutions.”

NSF’s discovery-driven mission has enabled countless scientific breakthroughs over its more than 70-year history and will continue to guide the American scientific enterprise to new frontiers. COSSA looks forward to working with the bill’s sponsors to develop the strongest possible reauthorization for NSF that includes robust, sustained funding, promotes diversity, equity and inclusion in the scientific enterprise, and keeps the U.S. at the fore of discovery.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research. COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social science research enterprise. The COSSA membership includes professional and disciplinary associations, scientific societies, research centers and institutes, U.S. colleges and universities, and private sector affiliates.

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